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# ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In searching for a desired image from an external storage device which stores a plurality of images, similarity between a designated search source image and  
5 each of the plurality of images is calculated on the basis of the feature amount of the designated search source image and the feature amounts of the plurality of images. A similar image is extracted from the plurality of images on the basis of the calculated  
10 image similarity. In calculating the similarity, an image is segmented into a plurality of regions, different weights are set for the respective regions, and the similarity is calculated using the set weights.

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